

Local area newspapers published the following accounts of the Old Red Mill fire shortly after the event.

November 8, 1961 *Charleston Daily Mail* p.1

Old Red Mill, Stocked With Antiques, Burns

Lewisburg's famed "Old Red Mill," stocked with a treasure of antiques and handcraft, burned before dawn today and is a total loss. It was to be opened soon as a tourist attraction and old-fashioned country store. The venture represented part of Greenbrier Valley's plan to lift its own economy.

Members of Lewisburg's volunteer fire department started fighting the blaze after a taxi driver turned in the alarm at 5:30 a.m. About four hours later the blaze was under control and near extinguished.

No injuries were reported. Andrew McLaughlin said damage probably will reach \$50,000. It was partially covered by insurance.

"We think the Old Red Mill had the greatest possibilities of anything ever done in Lewisburg", McLaughlin said. He and others concerned about his area's lagging economy organized the country store earlier this year. He said the building, a former grain mill, was completely lost- everything."

"We were just beginning to see a lot of enthusiasm" McLaughlin said. "We're distressed beyond measure."

McLaughlin, who heads a savings and loan association at Lewisburg said his group will be able to rebuild the atmosphere and all of the contents of the old store. "It would cost \$75,000 to rebuild the old structure as it was, he said. His group, which includes Greenbrier College President Dr. John F. Montgomery and Mrs. Randolph Hock, a Lewisburg hotel Owner, purchased the mill.

See RED MILL, pg. 8 (Copy provided by Steven and Ethel Detch Rogers)

November 8 1961 *Hinton Daily News* p. 1

Lewisburg's Old Red Mill Burns Wednesday

Lewisburg, WV (UPI)

The "Old Red Mill" - a landmark in this historic southern West Virginia town - was destroyed today by fire only a week after it was reopened for business as a tourist attraction-gift store featuring handcrafted items.

A group of local businessmen raised \$20,000 earlier this year to buy the 85-year old structure and convert it into a tourist attraction as a means to of helping the area's economy.

The blaze, of unknown origin, broke out shortly before 2 a.m, raged out of control for nearly two hours and was finally extinguished about 9 a.m.

Fire units from Ronceverte, Fairlea, and White Sulphur Springs joined Lewisburg firemen in fighting the blaze.

Former Greenbrier County Sheriff David Tuckwiller, who had been named store manager of the old-fashioned store, said "the three-story building couldn't be replace for probably \$50,000."

Loss of fixtures and stock - including many items with sentimental or antique value - would "run into thousands of dollars," he said.

The frame building with log beams and a corrugated exterior, was one of the first steam-powered flour mills in the country. Located on US 219 near the center of the 187 year old town, the mill gradually fell into dis-use.

The new owners converted it this summer and opened it for business only last week, The official opening was being planned for next summer.

November 9, 1961 *Greenbrier Independent*

Old Red Mill Fire

Fire broke out in the Old Red Mill about 5 AM Wednesday. The blaze seemed to originate in the south end of the long metal covered building located on US Route 219 in Lewisburg.

The Lewisburg Volunteer Fire Department, who were later joined by neighbor fire fighters, were greatly hampered in reaching the inferno due to the metal roof and sides. The stubborn blaze took some three hours of hard fighting to stamp it out. It is estimated that the loss will run over \$50,000. The corporation carried \$20,000 insurance on the building.

The Old Red Mill had just been put into operation by Manager David E. Tuckwiller. The stock was being assembled with prospects of a most successful future. The building created an ideal atmosphere to attract the tourist trade and afford local and West Virginia craftsmen a market for their wares.

The Old Red Mill was organized this year by a group of local citizens. The corporation was capitalized at \$30,000 with John E. Montgomery as president and Andrew W. McLaughlin as secretary and operated by a board of directors.

Also lost in the fire were all of the Christmas street lights for the town. The lights and equipment were stored in the building and were in the process of being readied for the approaching season.

November 9, 1961 *Beckley Post-Herald* p.6

'Old Red Mill' Destroyed By Flames In Lewisburg

LEWISBURG The "Old Red Mill" - a landmark in this historic southern West Virginia town- was destroyed Wednesday by fire only a week after it was re-opened for business as a tourist attraction – gift store featuring hand-crafted items. A group of local businessmen raised \$20,000 earlier this year to buy the 85 year old structure and convert it into a tourist attraction as a means of helping the area's economy.

The blaze, of unknown origin, broke out shortly after 5 a.m. And raged out of control for nearly two hours and was finally extinguished about 9 a.m. Fire units from Ronceverte, Fairlea, and White Sulphur Springs joined Lewisburg firemen in fighting the blaze.

Former Greenbrier County Sheriff David Tuckwiller, who had been named manager of the old-fashioned store, said the three story building "couldn't be replaced for probably \$50,000." Loss of fixtures and stock – including many items with sentimental or antique value – would "run into the thousands of dollars," he said.

The frame building, with log beams and a corrugated metal exterior, was one of the first steam-powered flour mills in the country. Located on U.S. 219 near the center of this 187- year old town, the mill gradually fell into dis-use. The new owners converted it this summer and opened it for business only last week. The official opening was being planned for next spring.

(Copy provided by Steven and Ethel Detch Rogers)

November 10, 1961 *Beckley Post-Herald* p.1

\$50,000 Fire Hits "Old Red Mill"

A fire of undetermined origin virtually destroyed the "Old Red Mill," one of Lewisburg's historic landmarks, Wednesday morning. The building recently had been restored by a group of local citizens as a tourist attraction and outlet for crafts and articles supplied by residents of the area. Manager David E. Tuckwiller estimated the total loss at approximately \$50,000. There was \$20,000 worth of insurance on the building, Tuckwiller said, but none on the stock.

(Copy provided by Steven and Ethel Detch Rogers)

November 20 1961 *Hinton Daily News* p.4

Andy McLaughlin, one of the promoters of the "Old Red Mill" at Lewisburg that was recently destroyed by fire is already planning a new venture of a similar nature.

He hope to raise funds for the erection of of an exact replica of the original "Savannah Mill" that is on the same ground that is now Lewisburg and make it a good tourist attraction.

You have to hand it to Andy, he is a real hustler and a good promoter.